



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 8 March @7:30 @ 9th and Lincoln

PROGRAM: The Schelps and the O'briens talk about opening their commercial dahlia businesses. Come learn their trials, tribulations, successes and secrets. Who will bring yummys to share?

SCIONS FLOURISH! NEW PUBLIC DAHLIA GARDENS!



Both Devorah and DJ shared their inspirations behind starting their own public dahlia gardens. Devorah began because she was tired of dogs pooping on the trashy grass beside the playground next to her house. DJ moved to San Mateo and attended the San Mateo City Services Academy, learning that Beresford Park would welcome dahlias. Devorah turned her stinky problem into a beautiful solution by involving SF Parks and Rec staff and her neighbors who brought in a sod lifter and



luscious topsoil. SF Beautiful responded to her grant request by funding her drip irrigation system. Likewise, DJ reports that San

Mateo rototills and brings compost. Both use their cities' water. DJ says he loves designing and laying out his plans each year, growing 85 dahlias. Devorah grew 70 this year but may double her clumps in 2011. Devorah educated her public with several signs; she loved speaking to passersbys. Living next door, Devi found it easy to futz often. DJ gestimated that after the initial planting he put in @3 1/2 hours a week including passing out culture sheets and DSC information. Both DJ and Devorah donated all their dahlia plants which can run to a few hundred dollars. Add in the fertilizer and any foliar sprays or oils and their "donations" edged up to four figures. DJ's giving back to the community has been recognized with newspaper articles, plaques, banquets, t-shirt and hat. Both DJ and Devorah shared 4 helpful hints for those of you who would like to start your own public display of dahlias: 1. Check out your community for potential sites which



must have the following: light, water and trash processing. 2. Approach your local Park and Rec people about volunteering your time and tubers. 3. Let them know you don't expect to be paid in money for your efforts. 4. Start small: you won't know how much is involved until you start.



POT WILD, THE GENEROSITY OF FRIENDS:

Marilyn brought bags of her hand thrown, hand glazed, and high temperature kilned, food compatible pots to share with her fellow DSCers. Marilyn fabbed just the right kind for exhibiting: heavy and shallow. We exploded into a frenzy of judicious pot choosers, each of us attracted to different aspects of her artistry. Thanks to Devorah for bringing in the wee peat pots for starting cuttings and seedlings. She got them from Plan It Earth from a company, genhydrow.com. We really welcome your bringing in tips and products you wish to share with your fellow dahlianers. Thanks to Pat for her delicious shortcake cookies and liquor cake and to Gino for his assorted muffins. Especial thanks to the Dingwalls for their comestibles as well as hosting our buffet and cleaning up afterwards.



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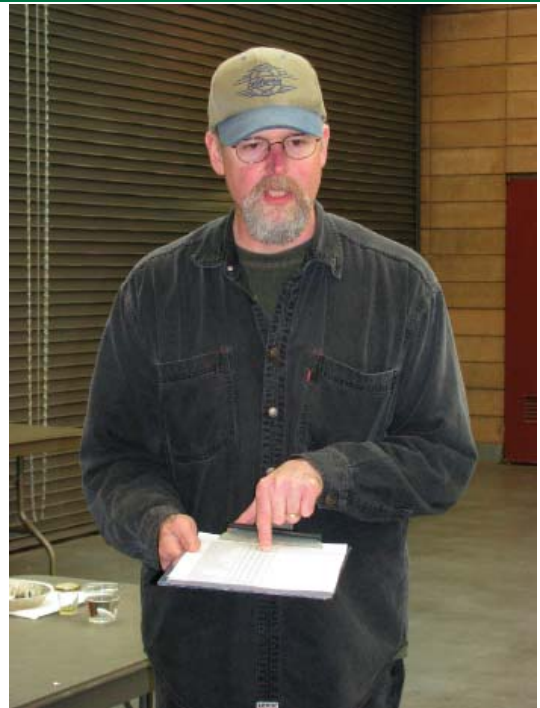
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DR. LOMBARDO'S CUTTING SEMINAR:

Back by popular demand, Lou will reprise his fascinating hands-on seminar on how to propagate dahlias via cuttings. You'll learn about tip cuttings, stem cuttings, leaf cuttings, and straight from the tuber cuttings. I seem to have my best luck with tip cuttings; Devi prefers taking hers right at the tuber. Lou can do them all! There is still room for 4 more people. Sunday, March 6 @ 10 AM @ the Garden Room, SF County Fair Building @ 9th and Lincoln.

Please call Lou to reserve your spot:
H: 415 664-2854 or
W: 415 664 6814.



VOLUNTEER FAIRE:

In the new building behind the Conservatory, Devorah, Deborah and Pat set up an inviting table to attract volunteers for our Dahlia Dell. To distinguish DSC from the 11 other Golden Gate Park organizations, Devorah displayed a fabulous slide show looping pictures of DigOut, Mini Shows, Maxi Shows, garden tending, Tuber and Cutting Sales, and, of course, lots of spectacular dahlias. Deborah brought a pile of tubers and a dahlia in a milk carton to explain window culture.



2011 TUBER AND CUTTING SALE:

Please post announcements about our Tuber and Cutting Sale in your local library, coffee shop, hospital, bakery, work place or other public spaces. Let the world know about this outstanding opportunity to buy pedigreed, competition quality dahlias. Print copies of the flyer below to hang in your local library, hospital, dry cleaner, bakery or wherever. If you have helped with DigOut 2011, in the Dell last year, hosted at our 2010 Big Show, or otherwise aided and abetted your Benevolent DSC Society, please sign up to help volunteer at our tuber sale, April, 2 at 7 AM. Please bring your extra labeled tubers. This is our ONLY fundraising event, so we want it to be wonderful. If we get everything organized in time, our volunteers will get some “shopping” time before we open the doors to the public at 9 AM. Remember to bring some yummy dish to share for our potluck lunch afterwards.

Tuber Sale flyer for printing

National Show T-shirts for sale:

The official t-shirts of this year's National Show are available for \$15.00 plus S/H. Please contact Tinee if you are interested in a t-shirt.



MUSTS FOR MARCH:

Move your tubers from their cool (not cold) storage into a warmer area. I move mine up from the garage to my loft. Most dahlias need between 62-65 degrees to germinate. Go through each bag to remove any rotten roots—they can cause their siblings to rot, too. You can try to rescue slightly rotten tubers by planting them in a loose potting soil (with vermiculite/perlite/sand added). Once the sprout is established, it doesn't matter if the tuber disintegrates. Pat just constructed a greenhouse from a metal shelf unit. She lined it with cardboard covered with aluminum foil. Inside she has her already sprouted dahlias and stacks of ungerminated tubers in milkcartons because



this SuzyBakeOven technique really raises the temperature inside. She has made a concentrated solution of ¼ cup Bayer's All Purpose fungicide/insecticide/fertilizer and added one tablespoon of a liquid fertilizer like Schlutz or Peters with a gallon of water. When Pat goes to spritz her treasures, she mixes one teaspoon of concentrate into a pint squirt bottle. This keeps things healthy and clean in the confined space of a small greenhouse. DJ already has seedlings dancing in his greenhouse. I have bunches of dahlias 6-10" tall already in their milk cartons in my greenhouse. Larger ones are now "hardening off" outside



on my protected deck, meaning that for a few days they travel outside for the warmth of the day and then return inside for the protection during the night, gradually graduating to 24 hours outside. Hardened off plants will undergo less shock when you transplant them into the ground than dahlias which go straight from greenhouse into cold ground. Some growers prefer to "stop" gangly plants by pinching out the top 2-3 sets of leaves. Not only can you root this tip cutting, but you also concentrate energy into the root mass in the remaining plant which will grow stronger stems and will withstand greater temperature and weather changes once planted outside. Now is your last chance to work chicken manure into your dahlia patch; chicken manure, being "hot" needs @6 weeks to "cool" down before inserting plants with tender roots. WEED zealously! Bob Papp brought my brother Jon 40 garbage cans (@300 lbs each!) to fill a new raised bed for maximum dahlia exuberance this year. With all this rain, weeds will be springing up all over.



Yours in Dirt,

Deborah

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Editor: Deborah Dietz
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Wishing you had access to the past 12 months of dahlia doings? [Click here for past newsletters](#)